

Recensions / Book Reviews

The Teacher: Theory and Practice in Teacher Education

By Allen T. Pearson

New York: Routledge, 1989. vi+168 pages.

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL J.B. JACKSON, CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

This book is best approached with two questions in mind: "What happens when the dean appoints a professor of educational philosophy to oversee practice teaching?" and "Why is it that, while many have written on the subject, no one has been able to explain the relation between theory and practice to anyone else's satisfaction?" Having been, like the author, in something like the former position and considering the latter to be a distinct embarrassment to teacher training, I read on with interest and soon delight. Pearson uses one of my favourite writers to help me understand what I am doing, and his remains a book I would rather have written than reviewed, for it is a most important contribution to the field and will provoke insightful discussion.

Pearson gives us meticulously reasoned, carefully stated reflections citing all the right sources, profiting from his experiences and from the resources of the Harvard University Philosophy of Education Research Center, and concluding that

attempts to provide an understanding of theory and practice in education that start from accounts of the nature of theory and practice . . . have not captured what is necessary in understanding the activity of teaching or in providing direction for teacher education. The common difficulty that these positions face stems from the fact that they begin from a characterization of theory and practice, not from a characterization of teaching. (p. 63)

That characterization may conceal ambiguities: teaching is an act as well as a practice, and practice teaching is practising for that practice.

TEACHING AS PRACTICE

Central to Pearson's account is the notion that teaching is a practice, not in the sense of practising an instrument (relevant though that might seem to practice teaching) but as characterized by MacIntyre in terms of "the achievement of [internal] goods," "standards of excellence," and "obedience to rules":

By a “practice” I am going to mean any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended. (*After Virtue*, p. 187; cited on p. 87)

Whether he can properly characterize internal goods as “those goods that can be achieved regardless of the social circumstances in which the practice is performed” (p. 88) has to be less obvious given MacIntyre’s definition, especially if we concede “that teaching and learning are necessary features of human society” (p. 89) and that “teaching is a practice that relates to many other concerns of life in ways result that in there being different and inconsistent views of what counts as a standard of excellence” (p. 91).

The intuitive distinction may be clearer than the explanation—“the internal good is the achievement of learning; however, what counts as desirable learning will vary” (p. 90)—but the practice, that is, the teaching, only takes place in particular circumstances. What better justification for the study of sociology, history, and philosophy of education—which Pearson does want to include in teacher training (p. 149)—for we must consider both the *abstract* ethical questions and their *particular* realizations?

The identification of “the intent to bring about learning on the part of others and the creation of the consequent intentional situation in which students take up the intention as governing their activity” (p. 89) as the internal good is certainly plausible, and it leads naturally enough to the standards of excellence (particularly when the assumed context is school or educational teaching) and so to disputes about what is learned and how. Talk of the students’ taking up the teacher’s (or the school’s or society’s) intention (or intentions) could provide a basis for the idea of the students’ involvement in or commitment to the things we value in education.

Here it is easy to become confused, too, for talk of “teaching that . . . was excellent if it seemed likely to bring about the kind of learning that is desired” (p. 91) can give the impression that the outcome, what was learned, is all that matters, and this is not so. Teaching is a process, and teachers are every bit as concerned about the quality of that process as about what was to be learned; despite mentioning “how,” this is not an analysis apt to draw our attention to the point—and this is unfortunate if practice teaching is our concern.

The internal goods of the profession or practice of teaching go beyond those of the act, and this is why we cannot talk of the internal goods of teaching outside the larger social context. The professional practice is concerned with learning worthwhile things in worthwhile ways and, I would add, in worthwhile settings. Pearson’s analysis of the third feature of practices, obedience to rules, illustrates this point. Following MacIntyre’s

example of chess, he makes the very useful distinction between incorrectly moving the pieces and mistakes in strategy, arguing that strategy is what matters because “it is the intention of teaching that is constitutive of the activity, not the rules of teaching” (p. 93). Strategies imply goals, and

the rules of teaching are largely, if not totally, strategic. There is no explicit rule book we can provide to teachers, as much as some would want one, that will tell them what to do. (p. 93)

Failing to correct strategic mistakes implies that one is not taking the game seriously. This is just what makes the supervision and discussion of teaching interesting: there is a shared intention in teaching, the teaching can be done more or less successfully, and there are things to be known (through experience and reflection) which are helpful. Professional strategies do not guarantee success; but they do have to be situated in a larger social debate about worthwhile ways of living, and normative knowledge is later included in the teacher’s repertoire (pp. 97ff.).

BELIEF, INTENTION, AND PRACTICE

It is interesting that a book so obviously centred on practice in education creates the impression that teacher training is essentially an intellectual matter. A close reading might show that the impression is false, but it is not without foundation. The professional knowledge of teachers, for example, is of causal relationships (pp. 82–85) based in educational research (p. 148); subject matter and general background understandings (pp. 102–106); and intentions, possible intentions, and how they might be assessed and understood in their historical and social context. It is supplemented by “reflective practical experience . . . in which one is called upon to revise one’s intended actions in light of one’s beliefs” (p. 149). Through experience, which is a source of knowledge, not a type (p. 100, but see p. 143), teachers learn to reflect on their beliefs and how to revise them (largely following Harman’s *Change in View*).

But this does not do justice to experience—to the less than fully articulated ways in which we learn to revise our teaching, perhaps coming to *do* better before we really understand why or even what the difficulty was, thus learning from our experience of success, nor to Pearson’s sensitive treatment of the knowledge we use in teaching, particularly experiential knowledge (pp. 149 and 99ff.) and general knowledge.

“Practice may be blind repetition but it need not be” (p. 143), and Pearson wants “a teacher education programme that . . . seeks to develop . . . intelligence and insight” (p. 133). But claims like this do not help:

The purpose of practical experience is not to demonstrate competence as a teacher; it is not to give the student the chance to show that certain teaching skills have been mastered; it is not to show that the student can manage a class-

room. Its point is to enable the student to develop the capacity for reasoned change in belief and intention, a capacity which I have argued throughout as being central to the practice of teaching. (p. 150)

I think, perhaps I hope, that he does not mean quite what this passage says: *a capacity* which is *central* need not be the whole story, and his talk of student teaching as a laboratory experience and of coaching suggests much more (pp. 150–151), as does the claim “my concern is that these experiences be reflective *as well*” (p. 142, italics added). We may need to learn by practice before we can criticize or experiment. We “reflect on” our beliefs, but we “revise” our actions (p. 149).

Practical experience is earlier characterized as: “Those opportunities and occasions that are provided to intending teachers to try out or test their ideas *and to practice the skills* they have learned or been taught” (p. 142, italics added). If so, two comments in the next paragraph become tantalizing:

Through practice one becomes more aware of what one is doing and increases the knowledge one has of the skill one is performing. . . . The knowledge that one becomes aware of through practice can be of a different sort than that learned in other contexts. (p. 143)

The knowledge acquired through practical experience is highly context-specific, “knowledge with respect to particular groups of children learning certain subjects” but “practical experience is *essential* in this sense for providing the teacher with the opportunity to acquire *knowledge in teaching*, rather than just to have knowledge about teaching” (p. 143, italics added). More powerfully still,

In teacher education our concern is not just with the possession of knowledge; we are concerned as well with the utilization of knowledge. The outcome of teacher education is intended to be the ability to teach, not just knowledge about teaching. (pp. 142–143)

Pearson’s coaching, practising, revising, and knowing-in-doing ideas are worth developing. For him, a teacher education programme is the most desirable but not the only way for a teacher to acquire professional knowledge. Many have learned to teach without training, Pearson notes; there is also the teacher’s continued professional growth after graduation. These too are worth exploring to understand the role and nature of practice. The way in which our beliefs and intentions are translated into practice is crucial to Pearson’s conception of strategy; this too should cast light on our understanding of profession and practice, and perhaps training and craft. These would be further books, and perhaps Pearson will go on to one or all of them; any person trying these challenges would be well advised to begin with his book.

TEACHER EDUCATION

Early in *Room With a View*, the Reverend Mr. Beebe says of her playing of Beethoven that “If Miss Honeychurch ever takes to living as she plays, life will become very exciting both for her and for those around her.” She does; and the quiet, conservative Mr. Beebe proves right. Pearson’s proposals for teacher education too are conservative but subversive. They sound reasonable enough; but, if we ever took them seriously, it is hard to imagine the extent of the changes that would follow.

He begins with the deceptively simple observations that teaching is a complex activity, that “the intention of the teacher . . . sets the intentional situation in which students come to participate with the teacher,” and that a “reasoned revision of intentions . . . would be central to teaching practice” (p. 131), all notions developed earlier in the book. There is nothing controversial here: “To become a teacher is to enter into the ways of teaching” (p. 132)—“the ways in which practitioners have attempted to realize that intention . . . an activity that requires intelligence and insight” (p. 133). Nor is the list of components surprising—subject matter knowledge, professional knowledge, and reflective practical experience—until we see that, although “the specific details of the actual [subject matter] knowledge that one should possess must be left to the careful discussion of experts and practitioners in the various subject areas” and “a high level of knowledge is needed for one to teach in the optimal or most desirable way” (p. 135), “the subject matter knowledge of the teacher has to be different in important respects from that of one pursuing the subject on its own” (p. 147). Seemingly innocuous components like “encyclopedic knowledge,” knowing “how the information fits together” (p. 137), and seeing “the place of the subject matter in the larger scheme of things” (p. 138) have a hidden importance:

Both biologists and biology teachers need to know biology in its depth and breadth; ideally a biology teacher and a biologist would be equally competent. The teacher, though, needs a kind of knowledge of the subject matter that the biologist does not. The teacher needs to understand the subject in its relation to other subjects and as part of the overall education of students. (p. 147)

There may be more to selecting good teachers, but imagine what that would do to teacher training programmes and their perception in our universities if either we or our colleagues ever took it seriously! (Imagine too what it would do for the place of philosophy of education.) But it does put meat on what are otherwise often platitudinous bones.

REFERENCES

- Harman, G. (1986). *Change in view: Principles of reasoning*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- MacIntyre, A. (1984). *After virtue: A study in moral theory*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

The Tact of Teaching: The Meaning of Pedagogical Thoughtfulness

By Max van Manen

London, ON: Althouse Press, 1991. 256 pages.

REVIEWED BY WILLIAM HARE, DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

Kierkegaard said that the very soul of a writer should go into the person's style. Certainly this book bears the unmistakable stamp of Max van Manen's approach. Numerous examples, anecdotes, and stories, often deceptively simple, illuminate the complexities that teachers and parents daily face. Van Manen asks, "Is it possible to act as a real teacher if one is not oriented to children with loving care, trustful hope, and responsibility?" and, in the context of his overall vision, the question strikes the reader as not only appropriate but vital.

Van Manen's existentialism (although disavowed) shows in his emphasis on the uncertainty in modern life, the open possibilities that confront children, the unique character of situations, and the inescapable responsibilities we all face: "The pedagogy of living with children is an ongoing project of renewal in a world that is constantly changing around us and that is constantly being changed by us." Pedagogy, the central concept in van Manen's educational theory, is intended to capture all that is excellent in parenting and teaching, especially the responsibility parents and teachers have to *influence* the child's development as a human being. Pedagogy, for van Manen, is a very broad and fertile notion which goes beyond teaching and instruction to encompass any encounter or interaction where an adult can contribute to the child's upbringing, to his or her moral, intellectual, physical, and spiritual growth.

A pedagogical relationship requires a sense of vocation, moral fibre, a loving and caring disposition, a sense of responsibility, intuition, a passion for knowledge, tactful sensitivity, humour, vitality and hope, maturity, an ability to be self-critical, and interpretive intelligence. Highly idealistic, as van Manen admits, but does anyone want to argue that these are *not* required? "A child calls upon me for help and I feel I must act responsively and responsibly to the child." Detailed examples show these qualities in ordinary situations, and help the reader to feel tension, conflict, and doubt.

Moreover, the anecdotes show the importance of the pedagogical moment, that specific situation where the teacher or parent must draw on a wide array of knowledge and values to formulate a concrete and practical response to *this* child's needs. Van Manen is, after all, trying to sketch that improbable entity, a theory of the unique. How do teachers know, how can they learn, how to act in situations different in crucial ways from any they have encountered before? Knowledge, principles, and techniques will be helpful, but sensitivity, judgment, and insight into the particular life contexts

of the children in question are indispensable. There are no rules to be learned from van Manen's stories but pedagogical excellence and technical expertise are, in any case, very different. Attention to particular cases, however, by developing a heightened awareness of the child's need for a sense of security, support, and caring, informs and stimulates our pedagogical reflection.

Such reflection may generate pedagogical understanding enabling the teacher to see the significant in a particular situation. Van Manen usefully distinguishes various kinds of understanding: non-judgmental, developmental, analytic, educational, and formative. These draw on different disciplines and skills, but only turn into pedagogical understanding if they can be applied in specific situations. It is not a matter of acquiring a set of skills however diverse. (Van Manen's own reading of certain cases is not always beyond dispute. Consider the case of Travers, the debater and devil's advocate. Travers is a cynic, but to argue a point to see where it will lead is far from cynicism.)

Van Manen is occasionally more confident than he should be about what a situation means. He quotes the parent who tells the child not to bring friends in since the place has just been vacuumed. Van Manen has a clear view about the parent-child relationship on the basis of this remark: the clean floor is more important than the child or the child's friends. In fact, we are told nothing about the context in which the remark occurs, so we lack the familiarity with the specific situation which is a necessary condition of understanding. A similar problem arises when van Manen criticizes the twelfth grade teacher who dictates a definition of "interpretive literature" to the students. The latter are said not to be personally engaged. We cannot, however, read deep meanings into words or behaviour out of context, and one might wish that van Manen himself had heeded his advice that we look past the superficial qualities of a classroom. His examples are more effective when he suggests the kinds of questions teachers might ask when reflecting on such situations rather than when definite interpretations are offered.

Because pedagogical situations require teachers and parents to respond with little time for reflection, much teaching must be habitual and intuitive rather than calculating. We cannot distance ourselves from the immediate situation and engage in reflection, but reflection can follow on experience and enter into our planning: "Pedagogical reflection on action serves to make subsequent action more mindful and tactful." Here we meet the concept which gives van Manen his title and occupies him for the second half of the book. What, however, are we to understand by "tact"?

Tact is what we need in pedagogical situations when deliberation and reflection are impossible and an immediate response is demanded. Growing out of a sensitivity fostered by earlier reflection and experience, it is "the ability to act quickly, surely, confidently, and appropriately in complex or delicate circumstances." To have tact is to have a certain disposition. It is, in van Manen's words, less a form of knowledge than a way of acting. It

presupposes an orientation to others where we have their interests and welfare at heart, unlike those false forms of tact or diplomacy where we primarily wish to manipulate the situation for our own ends.

It is very different from having mastered a set of tactics. The reader might well supplement what van Manen has to say here with Robin Barrow's excellent discussion of the limitations of so-called social skills in his *Understanding Skills* (1990). However, in his desire to avoid artificiality creeping into tact, van Manen goes so far as to say at one point that it cannot be *planned*. Even though he qualifies this by admitting that one can prepare for it, he has himself earlier in the book emphasized that teachers who do not plan ahead will not be ready for teaching. He had been at pains to point out that planning need not mean inflexible planning, but this useful reminder is curiously neglected when we come to the section on tact. The result is the unfortunate and unintended impression that planning appears to mean developing a script to which we are wedded.

Teachers will find many interesting points to ponder in the discussion of the forms pedagogical tact can take, such as knowing when to hold back and say nothing, remaining sympathetic and positive when the outward appearances are discouraging, and reminding ourselves of the possibility of subtle influence, and so on: "Tact means to step back whenever possible, but remaining available when things turn problematic." There are many such places where van Manen indirectly reminds us of Dewey's lesson that the educational situation is rarely either/or. The antinomies are to be faced, not conveniently resolved by arbitrarily favouring one alternative. The great challenge, says van Manen, is "to stand close enough to the child to want what is best for the child, and to stand far enough away from the child to know what is best for the child." This takes pedagogical tact and could never be reduced to a set of rules.

Max van Manen illustrates and confirms the wisdom in Aristotle's advice not to seek more precision than the situation permits. Like Aristotle, he emphasizes the need for judgment rather than rules and skills. There are, as he puts it, no ready-made remedies. What in the end is learned, is a deeper appreciation of the challenge in teaching and how we can in fact engage in that paradoxical activity of preparing for the unknown situation. Our tact should show itself in gestures and remarks that are spontaneous—yet thoughtful because they grow out of reflection and experience. Typical in-service training for teachers, with its emphasis on information and the latest fashionable methodology, will not, I am convinced, communicate as much practical wisdom as this excellent book.

Pour un enseignement dynamique et efficace

sous la direction de A. Safty

Québec: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 1990. 346 pages.

RECENSION PAR SAMUEL AMÉGAN, UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À CHICOUTIMI

Publié sous la direction de M. Safty, *Pour un enseignement dynamique et efficace* est un ouvrage collectif de didactique, une didactique que les auteurs qualifient de "dynamique parce que active, flexible, adaptable et tournée vers l'avenir" et "efficace parce qu'elle veut permettre le succès et la qualité de l'enseignement aux élèves." Pour y arriver, on expose l'enseignant et le futur enseignant à des "formules" ou à des "recettes qui marchent" et on leur donne l'occasion de s'exercer à la pratique de ces formules et de ces recettes.

Il s'agit donc d'un livre qui se veut à la fois théorique et pratique. Et effectivement, dans chaque chapitre, la théorie se termine toujours par des exercices qui permettent au lecteur d'en avoir une illustration et en même temps la maîtrise.

N'ayant pas eu l'intention, dès le départ, d'écrire une somme pédagogique, les auteurs se sont limités à présenter une introduction aux principes d'enseignement qui vise l'efficacité et donc le succès scolaire. En faisant ce choix, ils ont dû se résoudre à laisser de côté l'exploitation de certains facteurs importants de la dyade enseignement-apprentissage tels que le milieu socio-culturel, la motivation, la technologie de l'éducation. Leur choix s'est limité aux thèmes suivants, qui, à leur avis, sont importants pour l'efficacité de l'enseignement: la classe et l'environnement, l'action didactique proprement dite, la didactique spécifique du français langue seconde et la didactique de la classe d'immersion française, l'efficacité en général et finalement l'efficacité de l'enseignement dans l'école et la classe multiculturelles.

La première partie de l'ouvrage porte sur la classe et son environnement; elle est assumée par Jean-Marie Van der Maren et Denis Tremblay et comprend les deux premiers chapitres. Dans son article sur le groupe-classe, Van der Maren conclut que le groupe-classe, qui n'est au départ qu'un simple rassemblement, peut devenir une communauté grâce à l'action de l'enseignant. Ce dernier fait partie de cette communauté et doit en assurer la cohésion et la dynamique grâce à des activités appropriées de groupe où chaque membre a l'occasion de se sentir valorisé. Tremblay, qui disserte sur l'environnement éducatif, définit celui-ci et distingue les variables environnementales que l'enseignant peut manipuler et celles qu'il ne peut pas. Parmi les premières, citons l'environnement physique immédiat et les méthodes d'enseignement. Il souligne la nécessité pour l'enseignant d'organiser l'environnement physique de la classe (disposition des bureaux,

organisation générale de la classe) et de choisir les méthodes les plus appropriées pour favoriser la participation active des élèves, réduire le problème de la discipline et atteindre l'objectif visé.

La deuxième partie contient des articles sur les objectifs de l'apprentissage comme guides de l'enseignement, l'enseignement des concepts, la discipline en classe, l'évaluation et la mesure des apprentissages. Elle constitue ce que nous pouvons appeler la didactique générale de l'enseignement. Catherine Éberlé définit les notions de finalités, de buts, d'objectifs généraux, spécifiques, terminaux et intermédiaires, et passe en revue les concepts d'apprentissage, de comportement, de taxonomie ainsi que les conditions d'apprentissage. Safty présente la théorie des stades de développement de Piaget et aussi celle de Bruner sur les modes de développement intellectuel. Le modèle de Britt-Mari Barth sur les niveaux de complexité, d'abstraction et de validité des concepts complète cet aperçu présentation de base.

Monique Bournot-Trites traite de l'important et épineux problème de la discipline en classe, parlant tour à tour du modèle behavioriste de la discipline, du modèle de Dreikurs et du modèle de Glasser. L'auteure nous rappelle que chacun de ces modèles convient mieux à un âge et à un niveau scolaire donné.

Éberlé traite des notions classiques de mesure et d'évaluation de l'apprentissage: l'évaluation formative et sommative, l'évaluation normative et critériée ainsi que leurs interprétations, les sortes et les qualités requises des examens.

Dans son essai sur l'enseignement du français langue seconde, Patricia Lamarre oppose l'approche traditionnelle à la nouvelle approche davantage basée sur les compétences communicatives, illustrée par le modèle multidimensionnel de Stern. Tremblay aborde ensuite le thème de l'immersion française dans la perspective socio-politique canadienne, mais la considère surtout comme une pédagogie de l'apprentissage d'une langue seconde. Il fait lui aussi le choix de l'approche communicative pour cet apprentissage.

En terminant, Safty fait un tour d'horizon général du concept d'efficacité, et John Kehoe suggère qu'étant donné la politique canadienne de multiculturalisme d'une part et le caractère de plus en plus multiethnique de nos écoles d'autre part, les enseignants et futurs enseignants devraient développer certaines qualités dont l'accueil, l'écoute, la tolérance, le désir de comprendre d'autres cultures et la sensibilisation aux comportements non verbaux des autres cultures.

Le problème que pose ce livre en est un d'unité et c'est un problème propre à tout ouvrage collectif. Certes, il y a un thème unificateur, celui de l'efficacité de l'enseignement, mais, dans la distribution des chapitres, on s'étonne que celui sur l'efficacité soit relégué au neuvième rang. Au lieu d'utiliser une approche inductive (aller du particulier au général), il aurait été préférable, à notre avis, de présenter d'abord le concept unificateur et ensuite les concepts qui gravitent autour. Dans les didactiques préconisées

dans le livre, les auteurs semblent donner leur préférence à la méthode inductive et peut-être ont-ils voulu illustrer ici un exemple de ce procédé en adoptant une telle répartition des chapitres: fournir les éléments constitutifs de base avant la généralisation.

De plus, les chapitres sur l'enseignement du français langue seconde, sur l'immersion française et sur le multiculturalisme semblent faire bande à part par rapport à l'unité assez évidente des six premiers chapitres. Il faut dire cependant qu'ils sont pertinents à un deuxième niveau en ce sens qu'ils décrivent des cas ou des méthodes particulières pour assurer l'efficacité de l'enseignement dans des domaines spécifiques.

Le livre constitue cependant une contribution très valable à la connaissance et à l'amélioration du processus enseignement-apprentissage pour les enseignants et les futurs enseignants. Car si les traités et les manuels sur l'apprentissage sont aujourd'hui assez nombreux en langue française, on ne peut en dire autant des ouvrages sur l'autre pôle du processus, c'est-à-dire l'enseignement. En ce sens, le livre publié sous la direction de M. Safty contribue réellement à combler un vide. Il faut souligner aussi que le mérite du livre vient du fait qu'il réunit en un seul manuel les principales variables de l'enseignement alors que nous sommes habitués à des ouvrages les traitant séparément. Ce faisant, les auteurs facilitent au lecteur une meilleure intégration des notions décrivant la réalité de l'enseignement. En somme, il s'agit d'un ouvrage utile pour qui veut rapidement avoir une idée globale de la réalité de l'acte d'enseigner.

Research in Teacher Education: International Perspectives

Edited by Richard P. Tisher & Marvin F. Wideen

London: Falmer Press, 1990. viii+287 pages.

REVIEWED BY JAMES R. COVERT, MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND

This is a great idea for a book. After many years of neglect, international education is experiencing a rebirth. The editors have collected 21 authors from 12 countries to forward the causes of international education and of teacher education research.

Persons writing about international education must, unhappily for them, choose the most appropriate countries. The editors' stated aim is to collect "contributions from different continents or world regions . . . young and old traditions, large and small populations and different geographical regions" (p. vii). The British Commonwealth is well represented (Canada, Britain, India, Australia, and Singapore). Japan and China are included along with Sweden and Israel. The United States gives another North American per-

spective, but South America is entirely ignored. The Netherlands appear but France does not. Perhaps the editors excluded the Soviet Union because they foresaw its demise; but they did include West Germany without East Germany. The choice of countries will probably not satisfy everyone, and with this mixture of countries, it is small wonder that overall organization is not one of the book's strong points.

The editors intend to include reviews of teacher education research about pre-service, induction, and in-service education in each of the countries represented. However, even these broad notions do not show up in every chapter, since not all of the countries have each element in their teacher education programs. The editors therefore provide a fall-back position: "The reader is invited to search for comparable themes and issues in the research, noting how it is done, who does it, its influence on practice and policy, what we learned and the directions to be taken in the future" (p. viii). In fact, these objectives are well covered in the last two chapters, where much of the research information is compared according to a useful format prepared by Kratz and Raths, then summarized in the editors' final chapter.

One of the book's most interesting aspects is its discussion of research underway throughout the world. Studies vary from basic research on teaching and learning in the United States, to work on teacher recruitment in India and China, to Israel and its practices of teacher selection.

Despite the great variety of countries it represents and its emphasis on research, the book is easy to read and jargon-free. Its review of research offers little in-depth information on individual research projects.

The qualitative-quantitative discussion surfaces in several chapters. The authors of sections on India, China, and Singapore favour a qualitative approach. Wu and Chang of China and Kam of Singapore present interesting case studies. Zimpher and Howey include eight pages of references in their review of American research during the past ten years, and Wideen and Holborn summarize research back to the seventies with three pages of Canadian references. Most countries provide several pages of references.

The book's greatest contribution is its explanation of how social and political pressures influence educational research in all countries. The variety of teacher education programs and the role of governments in guiding training and shaping educational policy is fascinating. It is like taking a sabbatical at another institution so you can see their procedures and therefore better assess your own situation.

The governments of Sweden, the Netherlands, Australia, and Israel all provide significant amounts of funding for educational research, and in many instances the research is not done by persons housed in teacher education faculties. The authors in these countries are concerned about undue government influence. Perhaps McNamara makes this point best in his fascinating look at recent educational research in Britain:

The somewhat eclectic nature of this [research] activity has not lent itself to the accretion of a sustained set of research findings which have informed policy.

During the same period Her Majesty's Inspectors have visited teacher training institutions and acquired information and presented it in such a way that it is in tune with the beliefs of politicians and policy makers and can be taken by them to legitimate teacher training policies which they wish to pursue. (p. 135)

This book is a salient reminder that even though geographical regions differ, social and political pressures on education are remarkably similar. You might give the following quote to your colleagues and have them guess the country of origin.

Under the socialist regime, especially from 1950s to 1970s, teacher education served as a political force: teachers were supposed to be loyal to "the Party's educational cause"—to educate people to be socialist-minded. The current social reforms seem to emphasize teacher education as an economic factor with the pragmatic approach aiming at providing technocrats and professionals for modernization. (p. 236)

This very interesting book could profitably be used in various courses and will interest researchers and those interested in international education. The social and political issues it raises make it useful for policy study courses/centres and for courses in educational administration, school and society, and the like.

Teacher Appraisal: A Guide to Training

By Cyril & Doreen Poster

London: Routledge, 1991. 205 pages.

REVIEWED BY NADINE B. BINKLEY, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

School districts across North America are debating the usefulness and benefits of teacher evaluation for accountability as against teacher evaluation for professional growth. Increasingly, contracts between teachers and school boards call for new forms of evaluation, moving from a scheduled, cyclical approach to evaluation on an "as needed" basis, usually determined by the principal. Principals, and the public, raise more teacher competency cases now than ever before.

This new training manual on teacher appraisal defines appraisal, contrasts historic and current issues in evaluation in Great Britain and the United States, and, finally, guides appraisal training.

The Posters define appraisal as the supervision of teachers for the purpose of encouraging professional growth.

Appraisal is a means of promoting, through the use of certain techniques and procedures, the organisation's ability to accomplish its mission of providing a better service or product while at the same time enhancing staff satisfaction and development. (p. 1)

Appraisal is formative and free of judgement, observation is of the learner, and evaluation is devoted entirely to professional growth.

To provide context they contrast the evolution of appraisal in England and Wales with that in the United States. In England and Wales "the widely accepted starting point is 'The Great Debate,' initiated by James Callaghan in 1976 and calling for higher standards and greater accountability in education" (p. 11). The cry for accountability has become a demand for teacher *appraisal* rather than for teacher *assessment*, "developmental and formative" appraisal as opposed to "judgmental and summative" appraisal (p. 12). The United States became interested in the mid-1970s in evaluating teacher performance. However, appraisal evolved somewhat differently in the United States. Despite much research on supervision and evaluation "there is still . . . a preoccupation with performance ratings in the USA" (p. 26).

Observation of teaching is the basis of the authors' appraisal system. Their rigid prescription begins 24 hours before the briefing, with the teacher's submission of a copy of the lesson plan. The briefing should take 15 to 30 minutes, emphasizing the context of the lesson, planning and predicting problems, and negotiating an observation focus. Having provided guidelines for the appraiser doing classroom observation, the Posters list and explain the six steps of debriefing, including self-evaluating, identifying lesson strengths and weaknesses, and contracting for further support. The authors list each and present case studies to provide practice, thus permitting reproduction of all of these.

This book's clear and systematic approach to appraisal will provide comfort to the novice appraiser. If one has never thought about issues of appraisal, assessment, supervision, and evaluation, the Posters have provided a procedure easy to follow, showing us the pitfalls.

However, the more sophisticated reader will recognize early on that the model has many shortfalls. It is largely a management model: the principal or headmaster usually does the appraisal, although at one point the Posters state that "sharing the load with the deputy would be good" (p. 67).

In many schools in Canada and the United States, supervision for professional growth has progressed far beyond this cookbook approach. Many schools successfully use peer supervision, and teams of teachers and administrators often work together on professional growth. In other districts teachers define their professional needs and, in consultation with the principal, develop professional growth plans including systems, and satisfy those needs. These schools do not dismiss the question of accountability. A professional organization provides education, yet is a public service. As a consequence, the professional body has the obligation to hold itself account-

able to standards of performance. North American schools ignore neither accountability nor professional growth. In short, many schools in Canada and the U.S. have progressed far beyond the Posters' limited model.

This book is meant for a small and specific audience, familiar with the education system in Great Britain; acronyms, usually undefined, liberally pepper the book (HMI, LEA, GCSE, LFM, KRA, and at least 23 others).

Teacher Appraisal: A Guide to Training is informative reading for the novice appraiser, but only as one of several books that might assist appraisers help teachers grow professionally.

Collaborative Curriculum Planning at Universities

Edited by Chris Nash

Guelph: University of Guelph, 1989. 111 pages.

REVIEWED BY HOWARD WOODHOUSE, UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Collaborative Curriculum Planning at Universities proposes ways to restructure the planning, development, and evaluation of teaching and learning. Its several authors wish to change how faculty and administrators think about teaching so that it becomes a collaborative, research-based activity (p. 107).

Chris Nash's opening discussion of collaborative curriculum planning analyzes three dominant images: of the curriculum as product or outcome, of students as "clients," and of the university as a system (p. 15). Douglas Roberts takes up this theme, using a systems model of the curriculum, "depicting the flow of policy much like one would trace the flow of an underground river by putting dye in it and watching where it emerges" (p. 20).

The next section, on common goals for curriculum design in the university, examines Guelph's Learning Objectives of 1986. Norman Gibbins (Guelph) argues that these objectives enhance academic freedom by strengthening faculty members' sense of responsibility to both students and colleagues. Ernie McFarland (Guelph) believes that in the sciences the objectives have actually encouraged some faculty to include a historical dimension in their teaching, whereas the chair of English, Constance Rooke (Guelph), uses the objectives as a basis for instituting both curriculum change and new forms of teaching evaluation.

Later papers offer a management perspective, involving "reality testing" and problem solving, to laud the establishment of a university-industry-government collaboration in Petroleum Land Management at Guelph. Another paper reemphasises the role of students as "consumers" (p. 66) and the need for accountability among professors, particularly those in profes-

sional faculties. Desmond Morton also sees students as “clients” and teaching as “an essentially individualistic activity” (p. 67) requiring consensus among individual faculty if change is to occur.

The final section, “What are the Tasks Ahead?” begins with a statement by the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada (unchallenged) that emphasizes “the critical role universities are called upon to play to enable the country to compete successfully in a new world economic order” (p. 71). Joyce Forbes (Lakehead) responds by returning to ancient mythology to suggest that universities should be less Apollonian and more Dionysian in their “new alchemical role” (p. 74). Ray Rasmussen (Alberta) argues for a “force field analysis approach” (p. 83) that conceives of the university as a mechanical system obeying physical laws and requiring fine tuning so as to keep it under control. In her “Epilogue” Nash calls for closer links between business and “educational outcomes” (p. 107).

The overwhelming impression conveyed by this volume is of the university as a physical system obeying mechanical laws exerting billiard-ball causality, and tied inexorably to the demands of the market. Most of the imagery is mechanical, particularly among those advocating systems-type thinking. There is no recognition that physical systems and human institutions differ in certain fundamental ways. Although several contributors try to bring a humanistic outlook to their presentations, none of them challenges the idea that the university should be assimilated to the marketplace. One looks in vain, for example, for anyone to take issue with the model of education that views students as clients or consumers in the market. On the contrary, most of the authors embrace this model. As a result, they fail to notice that whereas the market provides the individual with problem-free products, education enables the individual to ask questions both of reality and of the disciplines of thought. Far from being problem-free, education encourages the posing of problems.

This inability to think beyond the assumptions of mechanism and the market indicates the emergence of a new orthodoxy that presents the reduction of the university and its curriculum to the market as an embodiment of freedom. Yet freedom in education may lie elsewhere, namely where professors enable their students to question and challenge “orthodoxies and criticize received opinions” (p. 10). Fortunately, this notion of education is still alive and, ironically, is embodied in one of the University of Guelph’s very Learning Objectives included in this volume. Unfortunately, few of the participants in this conference took the idea seriously.

Reconceptualizing School-Based Curriculum Development

By Colin Marsh, Christopher Day, Lynne Hannay, &
Gail McCutcheon

London: Falmer Press, 1990. x+229 pages.

REVIEWED BY DEBORAH COURT, UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

This book begins with thumbnail sketches of the educational-political situations in Australia, Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. After an analysis of the term "school-based curriculum development" (SBCD) and four case studies, a last section identifies common factors and issues in the cases and suggests future directions.

Because school-based curriculum development can involve everything from a single teacher adapting materials to a whole school staff working together to produce new materials, the number of permutations and the range of factors affecting them are enormous. The reader must sort through these, then move quickly through descriptions of conditions in four countries, each with its own circumstances, terms, and acronyms. There is a sense of "jet lag" from which it takes several chapters to recover. It might have been better to sketch each country immediately before the case study from that country, rather than separating them by several chapters. Chapter 2, which paints the landscape of SBCD, might then become Chapter 1. Because there is so much to digest, a strong advance organizer is needed (and missing).

Another factor reducing the book's cohesion is uneven writing. One case study is especially clumsily written.

These things said, the book has a number of strengths. Each case study is very interesting. It is fascinating to see how different political conditions affect teachers' and principals' actions in curriculum development, and to see that despite these differences, such factors as principals' leadership and teachers' desire for (or resistance to) collegial interaction, are common in the success or failure of projects.

In the final chapter, the authors discuss the politicization of education, and the relationship of this politicization to the role of parents and students in decision-making, the evaluation of teachers and schools, and the professional development of increasingly skilled teachers. Despite good insights, a vague unease remains. The final impression is of a work that is rich, diverse, uneven, and unwieldy. I was never really comfortable with "school-based curriculum development" as the book's organizing idea. The factors discussed in the last chapter, such as school climate, motivations of stake holders, and control, responsibility, and ownership, make sense as lenses through which to view the case studies. "School-based curriculum develop-

ment,” however, is never emphasized in the same way. The landscape is painted in impressionistic profusion, but the “reconceptualization” does not ultimately materialize.

Recherche qualitative: guide pratique

par Jean-Pierre Deslauriers

Montréal: McGraw-Hill, 1991. 142 pages.

RECENSION PAR SUZANNE MAINVILLE, UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL

Vous ne pourrez qu’être en accord avec l’auteur lorsqu’il affirme que peu de chercheurs et de professeurs prennent le temps d’explicitier le cheminement qui les conduit à une nouvelle idée. On discute, on réfléchit, on cherche, mais la mécanique de ce travail de réflexion est rarement explicitée. Les collègues chevronnés devinent et comprennent le cheminement sans que l’on ait à le leur exposer. Mais les étudiants eux, restent, selon l’expression de l’auteur, médusés. C’est donc à eux que ce livre s’adresse. À ceux qui, peu importe leur âge, s’intéressent et s’interrogent face à la recherche qualitative.

L’ouvrage est découpé selon les étapes qui devraient avoir été effectuées pour mener à terme une recherche. L’auteur discute de la question de recherche, de la collecte des informations, de la constitution des données, de l’analyse des données et finalement de la rédaction du rapport. Bien que traitées dans cet ordre, l’auteur insiste sur le fait que les étapes sont souvent enchevêtrées et, étant donné la nature de la recherche qualitative, le chercheur peut être amené à revenir en arrière, à changer de perspective, à modifier ses positions de départ ou même à modifier sa question. La recherche qualitative n’est jamais un processus continu et linéaire. Le message est clair: on ne fait pas une recherche qualitative comme on fait une recherche expérimentale. La recherche qualitative s’effectuant selon un processus circulaire, le chercheur devra donc réévaluer la pertinence de sa question en fonction de ses expériences sur le terrain et remettre en question le choix des stratégies de recherche tout au long du processus d’investigation.

Même si l’auteur n’a pas l’intention de s’attarder sur les aspects théoriques qui fondent la recherche qualitative, le lecteur se voit quand même bien situé. Dans le premier chapitre, qui donne un bref historique de la recherche qualitative, la seule lacune serait peut-être de laisser le lecteur sur son appétit. En explicitant brièvement l’origine et les fondements de la recherche qualitative, le fil conducteur ou la pertinence des informations fournies pourrait, à mon avis, échapper au lecteur peu initié.

Le second chapitre est consacré à la question de recherche. L’auteur discute des caractéristiques d’une bonne question, de la délimitation du sujet

de la recherche, de la revue de la documentation et du moment approprié pour effectuer cette dernière ainsi que de la transformation que l'on peut devoir faire subir à la question de départ. L'auteur admet que bien que l'idéal soit l'existence d'une histoire d'amour entre le chercheur et son sujet, il est rare que l'on puisse travailler, au moment où l'on en a envie, sur ce petit quelque chose qui nous passionne tant. Souvent, le sujet de la recherche est le résultat de compromis entre les aspirations du chercheur et une foule de contraintes. Les étudiants peuvent également devoir faire quelques compromis quant à leur sujet de recherche. Même si leur question est claire, il peut n'y avoir aucun professeur ayant les compétences requises pour diriger leurs travaux. Toutefois, gare à ceux qui s'aventureront à travailler sur un sujet qui les laisse de glace. Mener à bien un processus de recherche nécessite une persévérance qui pourrait bien faire défaut au chercheur indifférent. L'auteur insiste également sur un point capital: un chercheur DOIT terminer la recherche entreprise. Mieux vaut donc être minimalement enthousiaste quant au sujet de la recherche et rester modeste en évitant les méga-recherches qui risquent de se terminer en queue de poisson. Autant de conseils judicieux qu'il n'est jamais inutile de répéter.

Le troisième chapitre est consacré à trois techniques de collecte d'information: l'entrevue, l'histoire de vie et l'observation participante. Chacune de ces techniques est définie. Ensuite sont explicitées les façons de se préparer avant d'entrer en contact avec les informateurs, ce qu'il faut clarifier avec eux, par quoi commencer, les pièges qui guettent le chercheur ainsi que des indications quant aux qualités d'un bon informateur ou d'un bon site d'observation. Sans parler clairement de triangulation des méthodes de collecte de l'information, l'auteur signale cependant que l'on a avantage à combiner, dans une même recherche, des informations provenant d'entrevues et d'observations. Étant donné que la triangulation est l'une des stratégies importantes permettant d'assurer une certaine fidélité de l'information utilisée en recherche qualitative, peut-être y aurait-il eu avantage à mettre un accent un peu plus prononcé sur cet aspect, de même que sur la question de la qualité générale de l'information recueillie (critères de validité et de fidélité de l'information) qui, à mon avis, est traitée un peu trop succinctement.

En fin de ce troisième chapitre, il est question de l'éthique lors de la collecte des informations, sujet rarement discuté dans les manuels de méthodologies bien qu'infiniment important. Le chercheur a, en effet, le droit d'effectuer une recherche afin de contribuer au développement de la connaissance mais les sujets ont également droit à leur vie privée. Il n'existe pas de règle universelle à ce sujet et même les codes déontologiques propres à chaque discipline ne peuvent être suffisamment explicites pour être valables pour chaque recherche. Le chercheur ne peut donc escamoter cette question et se doit d'y réfléchir. Quant à la question de l'échantillonnage qui termine ce chapitre, l'auteur montre, qu'étant donné le but de la recherche qualitative, le genre d'échantillonnage diffère de celui utilisé en recherche

expérimentale et ne peut être déterminé qu'au fur et à mesure de la recherche. Des exemples de techniques d'échantillonnage intentionnel sont mentionnées ainsi qu'une brève mention des critères de décision quant à la taille de l'échantillon, dont le critère de saturation des catégories, qui sera abordé au chapitre 5.

Les chapitres 4 et 5 concernent l'organisation et l'analyse des informations. Dans cet ouvrage, l'expression "constitution des données" est utilisée pour parler du processus d'organisation et de réduction de l'information. Le terme "données" est alors réservé à l'information traitée. Les opérations effectuées dans le but de découvrir le sens sous-jacent sont regroupées sous le vocable "analyse."

Le chapitre sur la constitution des données est divisé en trois parties: les notes du chercheur, la transcription des observations ou des entrevues et le codage des informations. Les notes du chercheur constituent une source d'information essentielle pour aider le chercheur à colliger les impressions et les intuitions qui peuvent être utiles à l'analyse, mais aussi pour assurer la crédibilité de la recherche. Le chercheur doit, en effet, pouvoir justifier toute modification de sa recherche, tout choix de stratégie ou de méthodologie. Cette tâche pourrait s'avérer impossible si ce dernier n'a pas noté les choix effectués et les arguments qui ont justifié ce choix. L'auteur discute de trois sortes de notes qui constituent un éventail complet du genre d'information que le chercheur aurait avantage à colliger. À mon avis, la forme et le genre utilisé pour les notes du chercheurs importent peu puisqu'il s'agit de notes personnelles. L'essentiel pour pouvoir les utiliser étant évidemment de pouvoir s'y retrouver. . . . La section sur la transcription répond assez judicieusement aux questions concrètes qui se posent lors de cet exercice. Que faut-il transcrire? Les observations intégrales ou seulement ce qui nous semble pertinent? Faut-il faire une transcription verbatim ou partielle des entrevues, en explicitant les avantages et les risques que peut poser chacune des options? Finalement, la dernière partie est consacrée au codage des données, ce qui constitue déjà, selon l'auteur, une opération d'analyse. Le système de codage de même que les catégories utilisées allant parallèlement déterminer les possibilités d'analyse subséquentes. Quelques techniques de codage sont mentionnées et l'on fait une mise en garde contre les misères que peut engendrer l'utilisation de logiciels informatiques par un utilisateur novice. À mon avis, l'informatique offre non seulement la possibilité de sauver du temps mais de faire certaines analyses qu'il serait difficilement possible d'effectuer autrement. Évidemment, l'utilisateur novice devra user d'une prudence quasi maniaque mais il semble que l'informatique, au minimum le traitement de texte informatisé, devrait faire partie des compétences minimales du chercheur.

Après l'étape de la constitution des données, vient celle de l'analyse qui devrait aboutir à la découverte des liens entre ces données. L'analyse vise donc à construire la structure permettant de rendre compte des données. Dans ce sens, l'auteur note que l'analyse ne s'effectue pas seulement à la fin

de la constitution des données, mais qu'elle se met en forme au fur et à mesure que le chercheur travaille sur ces données.

Dans ce cinquième chapitre, il est donc question de l'organisation des données en catégories (pré-déterminées ou non) et des opérations pouvant permettre d'en élaborer le sens. Selon l'auteur, la démarche la plus utilisée en recherche qualitative est l'induction, procédé par lequel "l'esprit remonte des faits à la loi, des cas à la proposition générale" (p. 85). Une autre forme de pensée qui peut s'avérer très efficace dans l'analyse des données est mentionnée: la synchronicité. Cette forme de pensée s'apparente à l'intuition et peut être définie comme une illumination soudaine où la découverte de l'explication ou du sens ne s'explique par aucun procédé rationnel.

Bien que décrivant fort bien la forme de pensée créatrice qui est utilisée en recherche qualitative, l'auteur donne peu de moyens concrets permettant de favoriser l'émergence des intuitions. L'étape de l'analyse aurait avantage, selon moi, à être quelque peu étoffée. Comment faire pour induire ou pour découvrir un sens aux données par l'induction ou la synchronicité? La pensée créatrice, sous quelque forme que ce soit, ne peut être enseignée, je l'admets. L'auteur signale quand même quelques balises qui peuvent encadrer le travail d'analyse, mais ces dernières sont restreintes au domaine de la sociologie et sont également trop générales pour être un support au chercheur novice. Certaines stratégies plus concrètes auraient pu être mentionnées. Par exemple, relever les structures, les thèmes qui se répètent, refaire des super-catégories à partir de celles déjà imaginées, chercher le facteur commun, identifier les covariations entre variables (voir Miles & Huberman, 1984, chapitre 7) afin d'aider le chercheur à découvrir des liens.

Il ne semble pas y avoir de distinction claire dans l'ouvrage entre la phase de découverte des liens à travers les données et celle de l'interprétation ou de l'explication de ces liens. Pourtant, il est possible qu'un même fait (ou ensemble de faits ayant un lien entre eux) puisse être interprété (ou expliqué) de différentes façons. Il est vrai que les phases d'analyse et d'interprétation sont souvent effectuées conjointement. Cependant, l'interprétation des liens étant par définition arbitraire, il y a avantage à l'effectuer ou du moins à la rapporter séparément de l'analyse. Le lecteur doit savoir ce que le chercheur a "vu" à travers ses données (analyse) et comment il explique (interprétation) ce qu'il a vu. Plus loin dans le chapitre, l'auteur discute toutefois de l'utilisation de propositions (terme qui s'apparente à celui d'hypothèse) destinées à donner un sens aux données. Ces propositions seraient grossières au début de la recherche et pourraient éventuellement constituer une théorie. On peut supposer que ces propositions sont, soit le fruit de la phase que j'appelle interprétation des données, soit celui de la phase de découverte des liens, mais le rôle de ces propositions à l'intérieur du processus de recherche manque, à mon avis, de clarté.

Après avoir discuté de validité et de fidélité en recherche qualitative, l'auteur traite de la rédaction du rapport de recherche. L'auteur semble, à juste titre me semble-t-il, accorder une grande place à la rédaction du

rapport. Sans rapport, point de lecteurs; et point de lecteurs, point de recherche. Il aborde dans ce chapitre la question du moment de l'écriture, du style de rédaction, des états d'âme du chercheur mais aussi, de ce que ce rapport doit contenir, de stratégies pour élaborer un plan cohérent et de l'éthique lorsque l'anonymat ne peut être entièrement respecté. Le rapport d'une recherche qualitative ne doit pas se restreindre au cadre traditionnel des rapports de recherche. Beaucoup plus souple, il ouvre la porte à la créativité du chercheur et exige par le fait même, un effort de rigueur et de cohérence. La crédibilité de la recherche dépend en grande partie de la qualité du rapport de recherche. Une excellente recherche mal présentée ne vaut guère mieux pour son auteur qu'une mauvaise recherche. Le chercheur novice a donc tout intérêt à consulter ce dernier chapitre.

Dans son introduction l'auteur écrit:

En écrivant, on espère toujours plaire au plus grand nombre possible de lecteurs et de lectrices. Toutefois, par expérience, je sais dès le départ que tous n'apprécieront pas au même degré; certains seront charmés par le ton alors que d'autres me trouveront trop méthodologique et pas assez théorique. (p. 3)

Ce manuel est un guide pratique, effectivement incomplet au niveau théorique et présentant seulement les techniques de recherche les plus utilisées. La plupart des remarques que j'ai pu faire à propos de certains passages concernent des ajouts, des précisions ou des distinctions que j'aurais aimé voir mais qui peut-être n'ont pas leur place dans un manuel d'introduction à la recherche qualitative. Cela ne m'a cependant pas empêchée d'apprécier grandement le ton de l'ouvrage. Très peu de manuels, à ma connaissance, peuvent prétendre guider le chercheur novice tout au long du processus de recherche, de l'instant où l'idée ne fait que germer dans son esprit, au moment où il aura à rendre compte par écrit de son expérience. Cet ouvrage de Jean-Pierre Deslauriers ouvre donc la porte à certains aspects théoriques et épistémologiques de la recherche qualitative tout en apportant des conseils concrets, ponctuels, ainsi que des stratégies efficaces, des trucs et des ruses utiles, qui sont généralement inexistantes dans les ouvrages de méthodologie. La plupart de ces manuels se préoccupent, en effet, de la façon de faire une bonne recherche, sans se préoccuper de simplifier la vie de celui qui tente de la mener à bien.

RÉFÉRENCES

- Miles, M.B., & Huberman, A.M. (1984). *Qualitative data analysis*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

The Canadian Public Education System: Issues and Prospects

Edited by Y.L. Jack Lam

Calgary: Detselig, 1990. 337 pages.

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL MANLEY-CASIMIR, SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

This useful collection of papers considers diverse aspects of the organization and administration of public and private education in most Canadian provinces. The volume is organized into three broad sections on contextual issues, current issues, and future prospects for education in Canada. Ranging from the growth and development of independent schools to the prospects for curricular reform, the papers are written by an impressive array of competent scholars from different parts of the country and, unlike many collected papers, are of uniformly high quality—a tribute to the quality of the authors' scholarship. The book should be useful as a supplementary reader for upper-level undergraduate and introductory graduate courses in educational administration and policy.

Rather than describing each section and its constituent papers, I wish to comment, perhaps argumentatively, on the archetypal problem this anthology poses: that of usefully confronting the complexity of public education arrangements in a federal state like Canada. The problem has three facets: first, the volume's governing conceptualization; second, the absence of coherence between and among topics treated; and third, the omissions.

THE GOVERNING CONCEPTUALIZATION

The problem with the governing conceptualization is, quite simply, that it is mistaken. The title of the collection—*The Canadian Public Education System: Issues and Prospects*—shows a fundamental misconception about the nature and organization of public education in Canada. There simply is no “Canadian public education system” as the title implies. Even a quick glance at the organization and administration of public education in Canada reveals discrete provincial and territorial systems, systems constitutionally independent, culturally distinctive, and jurisdictionally autonomous. Such jurisdictional diversity is compounded by the delicate but forceful, omnipresent role of the federal government despite constitutional delegation of legislative authority for education to the provinces. Even that remarkable compromise, the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada (CMEC), consisting as it does of provincial ministers of education, is hardly the hub of a “national system”: however effectively CMEC coordinates inter-provincial issues, lacking federal representation as it does, it is clear evidence of the absence of any “Canadian system.” Curiouser and curiouser! (as Alice remarked). So to propose as Professor Lam does that the anthology “begins

with the contextual issues outlining the diversity of environmental forces that shapes the *public education system*" (italics added) perpetuates a basic fallacy.

THE ABSENCE OF COHERENCE

Charging an anthology with lack of coherence is easy, so perhaps I should demur to the inherent difficulty of the task of achieving coherence. In this case, however, the absence of coherence flows from the fallacy of the governing conceptualization. Conceiving Canadian public education as a "system" necessarily influences how one selects papers for inclusion. So, for example, I questioned why a volume dedicated to "public education" would include chapters on the development of private schools in Canada or on the funding of independent schools. The answer is that, given Canada's educational tradition, private and independent schools are variously supported by public funding. Such funding does not, however, a priori make these "public" schools. Yet again, I wondered why one chapter should be devoted to the reintroduction of public examinations in Alberta when the phenomenon of provincial examinations and their reintroduction is effectively "national." With due respect, Alberta is only one province, and in a volume ostensibly devoted to "Canadian education," the exclusion of the other provinces and territories is noteworthy!

On the other hand, many papers range widely over educational arrangements in Canada, doing their best to include developments across the country—a country broadly conceived as a nation. Such work is difficult, not only because education in Canada is provincially or territorially organized, but also because knowledge about education and research into education are often provincially and territorially conceived. Symptomatic of this pathology is that some years ago when I proposed a "national study" to SSHRCC, one reviewer commented that the case for a "national study" was insufficiently substantiated. Frankly, it never occurred to me that such a case needed to be "made"—it ought, I thought, to be self-evident.

THE OMISSIONS

Having spent most of my academic and professional life in British Columbia, I looked to see whether questions of educational policy and practice in B.C. (that curious, politically volatile, ultramontane province of lotus-eaters!) figured in the volume. Not surprisingly, I found allusions to policy developments in B.C. in many chapters.

Yet there are no chapters by authors from Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, or British Columbia. All other provinces are represented, Ontario and Alberta dominating, followed by Manitoba, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, and New Brunswick. How does this distribution of authors by province promise a perspective on *Canadian* public education?

Are Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, and British Columbia parts of Canada? Do academics at Memorial, U.P.E.I., Laval, Université de Montréal, McGill (*inter alia*), University of Victoria, U.B.C., and Simon Fraser have perspectives on public education in Canada? Or does the absence of authors from these provinces show the generic difficulty of defining what it means to be Canadian? Of assembling a book about Canadian public education?

I commend the contributors, particularly those whose papers reach broadly across the country. We need more analyses and discussions of education in Canada and about Canada from a national perspective. I would like to see editors of such volumes as this place greater emphasis on thinking seriously about those issues.

Decentralization and School-Based Management

by Daniel Brown

London: Falmer Press, 1990. x+284 pages.

REVIEWED BY LARRY SACKNEY, UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Recent educational reform has emphasized restructuring of schools following the idea that schools are not meeting societal expectations. The debate has centred on the themes of empowerment, accountability, and academic learning. Underlying the rhetoric of "empowerment" is the notion that school bureaucracy has somehow deflected attention from teaching and learning. Empowerment would allow teachers, students, and parents to play a more dominant role in deciding what schools should do. "Accountability" holds that schools should show evidence of the results they produce with students. "Academic learning," on the other hand, orients schools and their inhabitants toward improved academic outputs. "Reform" means reforming teaching, improving teacher certification, professionalizing teaching, and restructuring the relationships between schools and their clients through school-based management and parental choice.

School-based management, the theme of Brown's book, has been viewed as a proposal to debureaucratize school control and to make the school more responsive (flexible) to the needs of its clientele. Others see this kind of management as shared decision-making. And for some, it is a way of increasing teacher and parent influence in school decision-making. The outcome, supposedly, is improved productivity and satisfaction.

This book, although not about school restructuring, aims to discuss decentralization and school-based management.

The book starts with 45 interviews with educators to discover their perceptions of the import of decentralization in their circumstances. Brown then presents theoretical principles upon which the construct of “decentralization” might be based, concluding that classical management theory and structural-functionalism best fit. Brown’s study uses a qualitative research technique in which 114 interviews are linked to other documents and quantitative data. Many of the data were gathered in Edmonton, Alberta, and Langley, British Columbia, and to a lesser extent in Cleveland, Ohio and two rural districts in British Columbia. In Part 4, Brown presents “grounded research” on the five attributes of flexibility, accountability, productivity, change, and structure. In a final part, the author explores implications for theory and practice, contending that his book is not a work of advocacy but is, rather, pragmatic.

Although the book is a useful primer, it has flaws. The author interviewed 44 educators from five centralized districts, but does not tell us where these interviewees came from, nor how they were selected. Brown reviews many theories of organization and settles on classical management and structural-functionalism, but engages in subjective criticism without specifying his criteria for criticism. For example, in discussing Gareth Morgan’s book *Images of Organizations*, he asks why Morgan stopped at eight metaphors. Brown claims that Morgan treats the machine metaphor badly and comes down on the side of the “adaptive organism.” Similarly, Brown criticizes the Caldwell-Spinks model for not dealing with district decentralization, but education in Australia is state-run and school districts as we know them do not there exist.

Perhaps most perplexing is Brown’s decision to adopt a structural-functionalist paradigm, and then to engage in a qualitative study. Someone working in this paradigm would, one assumes, do an empirical study emphasizing randomness and number-crunching. Moreover, a structural-functionalist orientation could lead to considerable attention to such structural aspects as relations among roles, authority, focus of decision making, relationships among units, and organizational outputs. However, although Brown deals with the elements of a structural-functionalist paradigm, he does so superficially. He does not clearly indicate how central office and school roles have been restructured, nor how the roles of schools and parents have been distinguished. The only role to which Brown devotes substantial attention is the principalship. Interestingly, Brown admits in the concluding section that school-based management could have been studied as a cultural phenomenon, or from other perspectives.

The interesting part of the book is Brown’s analysis of the five themes: structure, flexibility, accountability, productivity, and change, essential to school-based management. Still, this part did not answer the basic question, “does school-based management increase the productivity of schools?” Unless it can be demonstrated that school-based management provides advantages in terms of increased student learning, decreased costs, and improved satisfaction of stakeholder groups, it is difficult to justify.

Does school-based management lead to reduced costs? Brown's resounding answer is "no." He qualifies this by saying that such was not the intent of those who initiated the construct.

Has school-based management resulted in increased learning? Brown does not really have an answer. His argument is that the data do not exist and that it is too soon to tell. (In the case of Edmonton Public Schools [EPS] Grade 12 departmental examination results, CTBS test results and system testing results at the Grades 3, 6, and 9 levels are available. The data would, however, require extensive analysis.)

Has school-based management resulted in stakeholder satisfaction? Here Brown uses EPS satisfaction survey data to answer in the affirmative. In general, stakeholder satisfaction has improved under school-based management.

Does school-based management result in increased innovativeness? Brown's conclusion is that decentralization does not hamper initiative-taking, but neither does it reward attempts at innovation. The limited data implied that changes in these schools were minimal at best (p. 156).

Finally, does school-based management lead to increased accountability? The results were mixed. Brown implies there is less hoarding of supplies; however, the data are based mainly on principal interviews. Brown concludes that school-based management results in increased decision-making flexibility in schools. The inherent problem with this conclusion is that much of his argument again is predicated on data obtained from principal interviews. Alexandruk's (1985) study of EPS suggests great variation in autonomy and teacher involvement from school to school. Some data show that some principals behave much more autocratically under this model. Considerably more data from teachers, both qualitative and quantitative, would have been useful. Moreover, this conclusion raises other questions. How has decision-making changed in schools? What participation models are used? Do teachers *feel* more empowered?

School-based management may not lead to increased parental involvement in schooling. Both Alexandruk (1985) and EPS data suggest that some principals neither want nor value parental participation. Does school-based management contribute to greater participatory democracy, or have we simply exchanged one form of control for another? Brown's data indicates a consultative rather than a collegial or collaborative process (p. 238). If this is so, what have we achieved?

In the final chapter Brown places a caveat on his conclusions. Because of the limited number of districts he studied, the relatively small number of interviews he conducted, his use of purposive sampling procedures, and his emphasis on data input from those involved in decentralization, Brown cautions that his generalizations are tentative.

The book does not provide many answers to questions about school-based management. For example, are instructional practices altered under school-based management? Do principals supervise differently? In fairness

to the author, the book does discuss decentralization, “how it is conceived, how it works and how it is attained” (p. viii). The author has to that extent achieved his objectives.

The book should interest those contemplating school-based management.

REFERENCE

Alexandruk, F. (1985). *School budgeting in the Edmonton public school district*. Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Alberta, Edmonton.

Self-Directed Learning: Critical Practice

By Merryl Hammond & Rob Collins

London: Kogan Page; New York: Nichols/GP Publishing, 1991. 250 pages.

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL OWEN, UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

There is no neutral education! Education is a political activity, and Hammond and Collins inform their readers how to establish an educational environment that will undermine existing power structures in educational institutions and in political systems by transferring responsibility for learning from teachers and central authorities to learners. That they achieve this goal only partially is not for want of effort or enthusiasm, but rather because of sometimes heavy-handed treatment. Educational institutions are authoritarian and non-democratic, and most teachers are willing tools of these institutions and the overarching political systems.

Much of the authors' political emphasis is rooted in their experiences teaching a part-time distance education Diploma in Primary Health Care Education at the University of Witwatersrand, South Africa, in the mid-1980s during a period of extreme political repression. Their students, male and female, white and black, well-educated and marginally educated, were taught or guided how to

understand and explain the social, economic and political determinants of ill-health, and to work to change institutions and attitudes which perpetuated those determinants. Those of us opposed to the oppressive status quo had to develop new strategies to address the issues which mainstream institutions ignored. (p. 18)

We make deliberate efforts to raise learners' consciousness and critical awareness, and to encourage them to see themselves as social actors with power to influence events positively—to make their own history. (p. 13)

Although there are political, economic, and social injustices in all societies, and people ought to know how to alter these conditions, Hammond and Collins exaggerate in painting most societies with a similar brush. The trials they encountered in South Africa are not transferable, *in toto*, to other western societies. And this is the rub. The techniques described to empower the learners are, for the most part, excellent and workable, within certain frameworks. The techniques, in themselves, are not political. The agenda of the “instructors” is political.

Informed by the writings of Malcolm Knowles and Paulo Freire, Hammond’s and Collins’s well-researched and practice-based book forces readers to consider critically self-directed learning (SDL).

Critical SDL creates in learners an understanding of the social, political, and economic environment in which they live, but in ways that appear non-threatening to the power elites. Critical SDL teaches learners the skills they can use in other learning situations, giving learners control over what is learned, when it is learned, and to what ends.

The first criterion for effective SDL is “building a co-operative learning climate.” Hammond and Collins are critical of traditional classroom settings as non-democratic, non-open, and noncollaborative; they argue, effectively, that in a cooperative learning climate, the “instructor” and students are eased into new roles—the instructor as a facilitator, the reflective student as in control of her learning. The learners, as much as the instructors, should participate on curriculum, scheduling, and evaluation.

“Analysing the situation” is the initial step, where educator and students develop skills to raise their consciousness about their social, political, and economic environment.

One mechanism to assist students to gain control over their learning, and to help instructors assess the requirements of their course or program, is the “generating of competency profiles,” the competencies that students are expected to acquire in the course or program. These are not strictly behavioural objectives, although some of the competencies may be. Students must be involved in the generation of these competencies, thereby critically examining the content of the course or program and understanding what is required to function effectively in the real world. Since the competency profile is an integral element of the curriculum design, and hence what it is that students are expected to achieve, it is important that students also learn “diagnostic self-assessment of learning needs,” “in which learners assess their existing competencies at the start of a period of study, using a competency profile as the self-assessment instrument” (p. 116).

“Learning agreements,” linked closely to competency profiles and self-assessments developed by SDL learners, are often more detailed and comprehensive than most instructors would insist on. Instructors who employ “prior learning assessment” or other non-traditional forms of assessment will recognize this as a useful form of evaluation, often causing learners to be harder on themselves, and on other learners, than are teachers.

For Hammond and Collins, however, learning agreements, negotiated between the learner and the instructor, are yet another strategy for giving learners control over their learning environment, over the curriculum, and over the assessment process. These agreements are renegotiable throughout the program of studies, thus encouraging the learners continuously to re-assess their learning needs and achievements.

The underlying message for teachers in higher education is that “to be effective as critical SDL coordinators, we need to radically re-conceptualize our roles, and develop insight into and strategies to overcome a variety of institutional and faculty-related constraints” (p. 215). Hammond and Collins argue for a complete educational revolution but anticipate opposition to any strategy that would reduce these institutions’ political power, including the indirect opposition of faculty and administrators seeking to co-opt but not to change underlying power structures.

Although this volume was based on their South African experiences, Hammond and Collins provide few insights into the benefits and problems of critical SDL in distance education. Hammond and Collins argue that SDL strategies should not be used without political and philosophical underpinnings, but components of critical SDL can improve opportunities for learners in distance and open education to control their learning. There are examples in Canada, specifically in Contact North, operated by Laurentian and Lakehead universities, that employ some of these strategies.

Self-directed learning for adult learners may operationalize andragogy. Learners know what they should learn, how best to learn or to create new knowledge, and how to implement this knowledge. Critical SDL might provide adult learners with the skills to become self-sufficient learners and, where appropriate, to take control of learning in structured (classroom) environments. Knowing how to assist adult learners obtain the skills of critical SDL will permit instructors to undermine, and perhaps to strengthen, the traditional forms of higher and informal adult education.

Hammond and Collins show that unless one is prepared to devote tremendous energy to “educating” learners, critical SDL may not be workable. They carefully warn critical pedagogues to beware of others who may attempt to co-opt the process for non-critical reasons. This step-by-step introduction to critical SDL will be useful to those unhappy with traditional modes of instruction wishing to try new pedagogical techniques.